

## **WV Minority-Owned Small Business of the Year**

Francisco Guerrero – El Rey Mexican Restaurant

Nominated by: Susannah Higgins, WV Small Business Development Center

The U.S. Small Business Administration's West Virginia District Director, Karen Friel is excited to announce Francisco Guerrero, Owner of El Rey Mexican Restaurant, as the SBA West Virginia 2016 Minority-Owned Small Business of the Year. Guerrero was nominated for the award by Susannah Higgins, Business Coach for the West Virginia Small Business Development Center.

Guerrero opened the restaurant in 2010 and prides his business in offering authentic Mexican food with outstanding customer service. He moved to Los Angeles about 22 years ago from Mexico. While in Mexico he was a leather craftsman by trade. He found an opportunity to work in the restaurant business and moved to north central WV 13 years ago. He was successful in making his dream to own a business a reality.

"The best part of owning a small business is the friends I get to make along the way," states Guerrero.

Guerrero credits the assistance he received from SBA's resource partners to make his business a success. Rob Hinton, a former SBDC coach went above and beyond the call of duty and even laid tile at his Clarksburg location; Tim James, the loan officer for First Microloan of West Virginia, helped him secure financing at both locations, and Suzzie Higgins – his current SBDC coach is always available to answer any question Guerrero may have.

"El Rey is a true SBA success story - his humble attitude and gratitude for the services we offer blew me away," states Friel. "I encourage other small businesses to follow Francisco's lead and utilize the programs and services we offer to start and grow their business."

SBA's West Virginia District Office celebrates Guerrero's award during an invite only luncheon at the Robert H. Mollohan Research Center in Fairmont, Wednesday, May 4 at 12:00 p.m. The awards luncheon is emceed by WBOY reporter Nick Farrell; attendance includes Senator Capito, Congressman McKinley, and Secretary Burdette. [Click here](#) for a list of the 2016 West Virginia District Small Business Week winners.